

# Lanterns for Peace

From Hiroshima to the World

*Booklet*





# Lanterns for Peace: From Hiroshima to the World

**Remember the victims.  
Light for peace.  
Act for a nuclear-free world.**

## **Welcome**

Every August, people across the world pause to remember the victims of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These anniversaries are not only moments of mourning and remembrance; they are also calls to conscience. They invite us to renew our commitment to peace, reconciliation, and the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Lanterns for Peace: From Hiroshima to the World is a global, decentralised commemoration inspired by the traditional lantern ceremonies held in Hiroshima. Through floating lanterns and symbolic gatherings, communities around the world unite in memory of those who suffered, in solidarity with survivors, and in hope for a future free from nuclear weapons.

This booklet has been prepared to support local organisers, Pax Christi sections, partner organisations, parishes, schools, faith communities, and civic groups in organising meaningful commemorative events during the week of 6–9 August.



## About the Campaign

### Concept

Lanterns for Peace: From Hiroshima to the World is a global initiative marking the anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima (6 August 1945) and Nagasaki (9 August 1945).

Inspired by the lantern ceremonies held each year in Hiroshima, the campaign invites communities around the world to organise local commemorative events using traditional lanterns as symbols of remembrance, peace, hope, and nuclear disarmament.

The campaign is intentionally decentralised. Each participating city or community is encouraged to adapt the ceremony to its own local context while remaining united through shared symbols, messages, and commitments.

The lanterns represent:

- Remembrance of all those who lost their lives
- Solidarity with survivors (Hibakusha)
- Hope for reconciliation and peace
- A collective commitment to abolish nuclear weapons
- Light overcoming darkness and fear

### In Collaboration With

#### Pax Christi International

Pax Christi International is the global Catholic peace movement dedicated to promoting Gospel nonviolence, justice, and reconciliation rooted in Catholic social teaching. Our advocacy actions are often in partnership with other civil society and faith-based organisations, enhancing our influence in intergovernmental policy-making and international organisations.

#### Hiroshima Coventry Club (Touro Project)

The Hiroshima Coventry Club is a grassroots activity group that engages in exchanges with the city of Coventry, England. We established the Hiroshima Coventry Club because we sympathise with Coventry's spirit of 'Peace and Reconciliation' and want to spread it. From the variety of practices that realize the spirit of "peace and reconciliation" in Coventry, we have learned and hope to spread the idea as following:

"Peace and Reconciliation" is:

- Resolving conflicts through dialogue without the use of force.
- Post-war reconciliation involves mutually commemorating each other's victims and offering sincere apologies and compensation.
- Never forgetting history.
- Deepening mutual understanding and fostering friendship through exchanges.

We hold an annual gathering on "Coventry Day" to commemorate the victims of the Coventry bombing on November 14, 1940. We also give talks at gatherings and school visits about Coventry's "Peace and Reconciliation" This Touro(lantern) project is also a practical application of the above principles.



## Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Call for Peace

On the morning of 6 August 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima. Tens of thousands of people were killed instantly, and many more died in the weeks, months, and years that followed due to burns, injuries, and radiation exposure.

Homes, schools, hospitals, and places of worship were destroyed. Families disappeared in moments. Survivors carried deep physical and emotional wounds throughout their lives.

Yet amid the devastation, survivors began rebuilding their communities and dedicating themselves to ensuring that such suffering would never happen again.

Three days later, on 9 August 1945, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

Again, countless lives were lost, and entire communities were devastated. Churches, homes, schools, and neighbourhoods were destroyed. Survivors endured immense suffering and lifelong trauma.

Together, Hiroshima and Nagasaki stand as enduring reminders of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

## The Hibakusha

The Japanese word Hibakusha refers to the survivors of the atomic bombings.

For decades, Hibakusha have courageously shared their testimonies with the world. Their voices remind humanity of the human cost of war and the urgent need for nuclear disarmament.

Many survivors have dedicated their lives to peace education and advocacy, insisting that no people anywhere should ever experience such suffering again.

As the number of living Hibakusha declines with time, preserving and sharing their stories becomes ever more important.

## Why Remembrance Matters Today

### **The threat of nuclear weapons has not disappeared.**

Thousands of nuclear warheads still exist worldwide, and geopolitical tensions continue to place humanity at risk. Nuclear weapons pose catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences that transcend borders, generations, and ecosystems.

Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki is therefore not only about the past. It is about the present and the future.

Remembrance calls us to:

- Protect human dignity
- Reject violence and mass destruction
- Promote dialogue and reconciliation
- Support international disarmament efforts
- Build a culture of peace and nonviolence



## The Meaning of the Lantern Ceremony

### Origins of the Lantern Ceremony

Every year in Hiroshima, thousands of lanterns are floated on the Motoyasu River near the Atomic Bomb Dome.

The ceremony honours those who died in the bombing and offers prayers for peace.

Families, children, visitors, and peace advocates write messages of remembrance, hope, and commitment on lanterns before releasing them onto the water.

As night falls, the lanterns create a moving river of light – a symbol of memory, mourning, hope, and shared humanity.

### Symbolism of the Lanterns

The lanterns symbolise:

- Remembrance: The light honours those whose lives were lost and acknowledges the suffering endured by victims and survivors.
- Hope: Each lantern expresses hope for a more peaceful and compassionate future.
- Peace: The shared act of lighting lanterns creates a visible commitment to peace and nonviolence.
- Global Solidarity: By participating together across countries and cultures, communities affirm that peace is a universal responsibility.

### Lanterns Information

**The lanterns used in this campaign are inspired by traditional Hiroshima peace lanterns. They are handmade through the Hiroshima Coventry Club (Touro Project), preserving the spirit and symbolism of the original lantern ceremonies held in Hiroshima.**

Each lantern is carefully assembled using lightweight and environmentally conscious materials suitable for commemorative use.

The lanterns are prepared by students, local craftspeople and volunteers connected to peace education initiatives in Hiroshima. Their work reflects a deep commitment to remembrance, cultural exchange, and global solidarity.

Participants are encouraged to personalise lanterns with:

- Messages of peace
- Names or dedications
- Prayers or reflections
- Drawings or symbols of hope

Where local environmental regulations do not permit floating lanterns on water, communities are encouraged to organise symbolic alternatives such as illuminated displays, candle circles, suspended lantern installations, or collective public ceremonies.



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## The Campaign

“Lanterns for Peace: From Hiroshima to the World” seeks to bring communities together in a shared act of remembrance and hope. Through local commemorations inspired by the Hiroshima lantern ceremony, participants honour the victims and survivors of the atomic bombings while renewing a collective commitment to peace and nuclear disarmament.

The campaign encourages Pax Christi sections, youth groups, faith communities, schools, and civil society organisations to organise local events adapted to their own context. Whether through floating lanterns on water or symbolic ceremonies in public spaces, each gathering becomes part of a wider global movement connected through memory, solidarity, and the desire for a nuclear-free world.

Beyond commemoration, the initiative aims to strengthen local peace engagement, raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and create visible signs of hope and unity across different countries and cultures.

## Lantern Distribution

To support participation around the world, lanterns will be made available to selected cities and Pax Christi sections.

This year Brussels, New York City, Vienna, and Geneva will receive lanterns directly made in Hiroshima. The lanterns used for the campaign are the same type used during the annual lantern floating ceremony held at the Motoyasu River in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. They are decorated by junior high school students in Hiroshima, who express through drawings and messages their hopes for peace, solidarity, and nuclear disarmament.

Pax Christi International Sections and PCI Youth Forum are encouraged to join the initiative either by creating their own lanterns locally using shared instructions and educational materials available in the next section.

## Timeline

May	Outreach and confirmation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact participating Sections</li> <li>Confirm local coordinators</li> </ul>
End of May / Beginning of June	Internal Launching Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentation of campaign objectives and materials</li> <li>Coordination among participating sections</li> </ul>
June 2026	Shipping and Local Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm deliveries in Brussels, NY, Vienna and Geneva</li> <li>Finalise local logistics</li> </ul>
June – July 2026	Communication Push	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote local events</li> <li>Launch local&amp;social media and institutions outreach</li> </ul>
6 & 9 August 2026	Commemorative Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise ceremonies and gatherings</li> <li>Share photos and testimonies</li> </ul>
Post-August 2026	Photo Collection and Impact Recap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather photos and stories</li> <li>Share reflections and lessons learned</li> <li>Document participation and visibility</li> </ul>



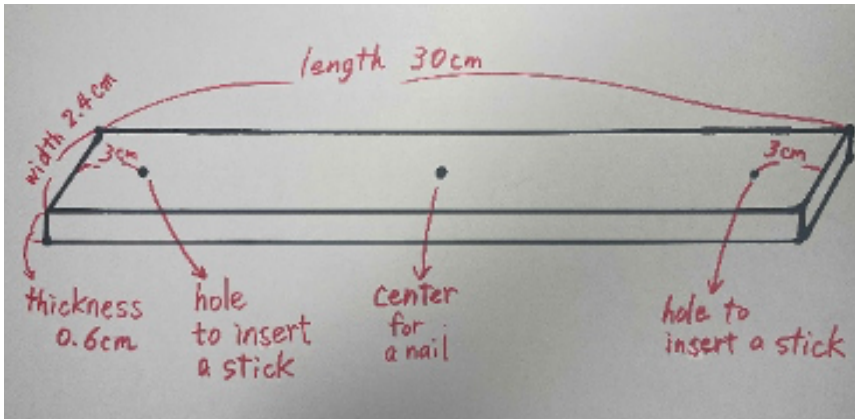
## How to create your lantern



1

### Materials

- ① Thin and long wooden board (30cm×2.4cm×0.6cm) 2
- ② Nail (4cm) 1
- ③ Round sticks(22cm) 4
- ④ Paper (25cm×78cm) 1
- ⑤ Candle (10-18cm) 1

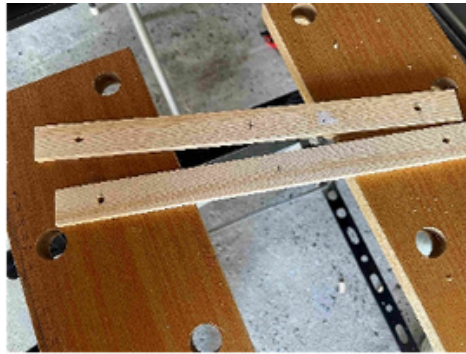


2

Mark three points on the wood  
One mark at the center of the wood ( for a nail) / two marks at 3cm from the end of the wood (for standing sticks)



- 3 Make a hole 3cm from the end of the board



- 4 Four holes in total



- 5 Clean around the holes with sandpaper



- 6 Place two boards on top of each other and drive a nail through the center.



- 7 Shift the two boards and spread them out



- 8 Apply glue to the sticks



## How to create your lantern



9 Insert sticks into four holes



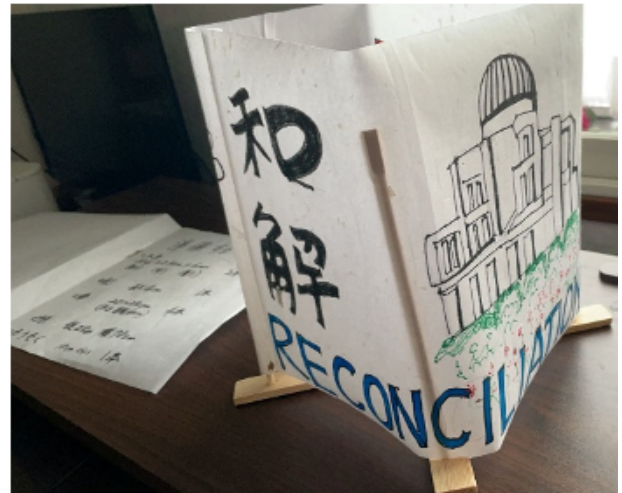
10 Cut off the part that is sticking out on the back.



11 After cutting back the structure of the lantern is completed



12 Draw pictures and write your wishes/words



13 Attach the paper



14

Place a candle in the center and your lantern is ready!



## Organising a Local Event

### Suggested Event Timing

Events are encouraged during the week of 6–9 August, preferably on 6 August, the anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing.

Communities may choose formats appropriate to their local context, traditions, and capacities.

### Core Elements of the Event

#### 1. Lantern Floating or Symbolic Ceremony

If possible, lanterns may be floated on rivers, lakes, ponds, or other safe water locations. If water access is unavailable or environmental restrictions apply, organisers are encouraged to use symbolic alternatives such as: illuminated lantern displays; Candlelight vigils; Public installations; Lantern processions, Indoor ceremonies.

#### 2. Moment of Silence or Prayer

A shared moment of silence allows participants to remember victims and reflect on the importance of peace. Interfaith prayers, meditations, or reflections may also be included.

#### 3. Reading Hibakusha Testimonies

Reading survivor testimonies personalises the history and creates deeper emotional connection. Short testimonies, letters, poems, or reflections can be shared by community members, students, faith leaders, or youth participants. Testimonies can be found here:

<https://hibakushastories.org/meet-the-hibakusha/>

#### 4. Readings, Prayers, and Reflections

Useful materials can be found here: <https://www.hiroshima-remembered.com/online/index.html>

### Communication Guidelines

#### Social Media

Participants are encouraged to share photos, reflections, videos, and local stories via social media by using the suggested hashtags: #LanternsForPeace #HiroshimaToTheWorld #NuclearFreeWorld #IntegralDisarmament and by sending them via email to Pax Christi International address [communications@paxchristi.net](mailto:communications@paxchristi.net) with a short description of the event and of the organisers.

#### Media Outreach

When speaking publicly, organisers are encouraged to emphasise: Human dignity; The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons; Intergenerational responsibility; Hope and constructive action.



80  
YEARS FOR PEACE

PAX  
CHRISTI  
INTERNATIONAL

